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Russell

Economics of Ireland and the  
Policy of the British  
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THE ECONOMICS OF IRELAND  
AND THE POLICY OF THE  
BRITISH GOVERNMENT

*by*

GEORGE W. RUSSELL

(“AE”)

*With an introduction by*

FRANCIS HACKETT



NEW YORK  
B. W. HUEBSCH, INC.  
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MR. RUSSELL's essay was first printed in the *Freeman* (New York) under the title, "Sir Auckland Geddes' Handiwork."

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## INTRODUCTION

Most of us feel strongly, and talk strongly, about national questions, but it is the exceptional man who holds his feelings and his tongue in check until he has achieved mastery of his more immediate and more egoistic inclinations. Among such exceptional men, of our generation, I know none more distinguished than the Ulsterman, George W. Russell. George Russell is the one towering figure of contemporary Ireland. Because he has never worked in England, like Bernard Shaw or George Moore or W. B. Yeats, his name is not so well known along the beaten paths of publicity. In proportion to his achievement he is, I think, not at all well known. But no one who ever sees his weekly journal, *The Irish Homestead*, or who has read his poetry, examined his paintings or thought over his books on nationality and cooperation and the state, can fail to have a sense of the fine and soaring distinction of this Irishman. And what gives his distinction its powerful and permanent quality is the base on which it stands. George Russell is eloquent and imaginative, but he is definite, candid, pointed and sane. Into his Irishness there is mixed something that has the tang of the Northern province. It is not exactly Scotch cautiousness. It is not exactly harsh Presbyterian naturalism. But it is something hard and clear and firm, that cannot be easily traded upon or misled. And this quality, so often devoted to personal advancement, George Russell has given with absolute disinterestedness to the large pursuits that I have named. Other men, of course, in the religious world or the artistic or the educational or the socialistic, can and do exhibit this sort of disinterested-

ness. It was common during the war, on both sides. In Ireland, as the movement that ended in the Easter executions testified, perfect self-sacrifice for a political or social cause, is by no means rare. But the thing that marks the devotion of George Russell is the swift and sweeping intelligence that has accompanied it. In holding to his cause of Irish agricultural and industrial development, he has embraced the realities of all civilization. It is this, in my opinion, that makes him tower above all other Irish spokesmen. It is this that makes The Irish Homestead editorials the best editorials in the English language to-day.

This is the witness who comes to testify to Americans on the real meaning of Lloyd George's new bill for the government of Ireland. He does not, so far as I know, enjoy the business of political discussion. He was appointed by Lloyd George to the Irish Convention of 1917, and when that convention failed he practically made up his mind to put his future efforts into activities removed from politics. But much as he distrusts politics, and aloof as he holds himself from them, he is too anxious for a brotherhood of Irishmen not to speak when he alone seems able to speak effectively. This accounts for his coming forward now. He comes forward not as a Nationalist, a Republican or a Unionist. He comes forward as an Irishman, an economist and a believer in public opinion. In his own words, he writes "in order that no American who is interested in Ireland may be deceived."

There are many points, indeed, on which Americans may be deceived in regard to Ireland. What, for example, is the real policy of the British Government? On the face of it, as a great many Americans of British

forbears contend, British policy in regard to Ireland cannot be dishonest or debased—stupid, perhaps, or misguided, but not dishonest. Men who believe in what Gilbert Murray calls the “profound consciousness of ultimate brotherhood between the two great English-speaking peoples” are loath to believe that the policy of the British Government ever could be crooked and sinister. They set such assertions down to passion—that passion which, as George Russell himself declares, when it enters into public life “too often makes men blind in action and reckless in speech, and things are done and said which bring disaster to the nation.”

It is not in passion that George Russell analyzes the sinister policy of Britain. He does not speak out of those fuming instincts that belong to every herd. He speaks as a hard, clear economist, who reads what the scales record.

And what a picture he gives us in the article that follows of a governmental policy not straightforward, not disinterested, not even commonly honest. He does not assert, he demonstrates, that the British Government has after long calculation devised a scheme by which the Irish people cannot possibly work out their own salvation. Is this incredible? We all know that it is not incredible that such schemes should be devised. Some of them were developed at Versailles. It is a similar scheme that George Russell patiently exposes in this article. He shows, first of all, the cold policy of the British government in regard to Irish trade and taxation. He portrays as “sheer robbery,” with necessarily dire results, the forced contribution from Ireland of eighteen millions in sterling a year. But more crippling even than this exaction, in the judgment of Russell, is the power-

lessness of Ireland in regard to its taxation and its trade. Is there any attempt to aid in the development of Irish agriculture or industries? Is there any attempt to give Ireland access to American markets, or America access to Ireland? There is, instead, the actual manacling of Ireland's underdeveloped industries, in obedience to British jealousy. There is the same cruel and dwarfing inhibition of Irish technical culture. The Irish government is to have no power to remit taxation or extend bounties. It is driven to depress the standard of life of its poorer classes, and to raise an inordinate revenue at the expense of these workers, of which Britain is to skim the cream. In addition, the Irish must continue to trade through Britain with whatever customers and producers it has by mere chance in the rest of the world. For this dependence, also, the bill provides indirectly, governed by its indefensible desire to keep Ireland enslaved.

Such enslavement, however, requires more than a trade policy; and George Russell shows further how it is being secured. It is "not the policy of the British Government that one section of the people should trust another section." He illustrates therefore how the British Government has juggled with the Ulster area, in "its reactionary attempt to make religion the basis of politics." This passage in Mr. Russell's argument is particularly important. When Lloyd George communicated his plan to America he did not explain how "Ulster" was to be defined. George Russell shows how it has been defined, and why. And he shows how the Lloyd George division cuts the heart out of representative government in Ireland, as modern democracy conceives representative government.

But is not Ulster being protected? And is this whole scheme not a sample of federalism? Mr. Russell explains the bad intention of partitioning Ulster from the rest of Ireland. He proves the helpless and exasperating subordination that is implied in this kind of "federalism."

But even if Nationalist Ireland were not actually much richer than Unionist Ireland, even if the extortion of eighteen million pounds were adjusted to say eight millions, even if the Council were changed and county option allowed and the police made local and indirect taxation arranged to suit an Irish standard of living, the bill that is here riddled to pieces would remain a monument of human perfidy. And this Mr. Russell also intimates.

He intimates it by showing, on the one hand, the high possibilities of civilization that await Ireland (to which Ireland is alive), and, on the other, the smashing ruthlessness of British military power. That military power is directed against the heart of Ireland, against a nationality that has been misunderstood, belittled, reviled and despoiled.

"The power of Germany," said an Oxford Pamphlet in 1914, "the power of Germany over Alsace Lorraine or over Belgium means, if it means anything at all, that a certain number of human beings, Belgians or Alsatians, are forced to act in various ways against their inclinations at the command of other individuals, not because they admire or respect these individuals but from fear of the consequence of disobedience. The will of Germany is decided by the wills of individual Germans. It is being exercised at this moment upon individual Belgians, with what results of suffering and anguish to the victims and brutalization to the oppressors we are every day learning.

The power of one nation over another which can be gained by war means this and nothing else than this, in whatever various forms it may be exercised. If we believe that it is not good for one man to have arbitrary power over others, if we believe that slavery is bad for the master as well as for the slave, we must believe it equally bad for one nation to rule over another against its will. To adapt Lincoln's words: No nation is good enough to rule over another nation without that other's consent."

That is what George Russell means, with the change of Germany to Britain and Belgium to Ireland, when he utters the brutal fact: "Great Britain holds Ireland by military power and not by moral power."

Perhaps it is foolish to talk to Americans of British descent, about moral power. But no one who wants to see life lifted up out of the squalor and hatred, the disease and famine, into which it has been plunged by mad imperialism can resist pleading, in the name of principle, for a sober understanding of the facts that Mr. Russell presents. The cause of Ireland is moral, or it is nothing.

No policy of the British Government, however debased and dishonest, can crush Ireland. It can only give her suffering and anguish, while brutalizing the oppressor. But the time has now come for the world to set its consciousness against the establishment of such policies, and resolutely to deprive imperialism of the sanctions without which it cannot live.

"The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs [Lord Curzon] has appointed a committee, with Sir Charles Eliot as chairman, to advise regarding a common policy towards British institutions, which will tend to promote solidarity among British communities in foreign countries. The committee has been given a wide scope. It

will examine the question of further fostering solidarity by the propagation of British ideals in foreign countries. The suggestions made cover the registration of British subjects and encouragement of British schools, chambers of commerce, and local British newspapers and clubs."

So British Imperialism is setting its foot in the path of German imperialism. So the victor drinks of victory, and is blind. But the world is sick of such maleficence. It is through with such underhand solidarity. Not all the "solidarity" on earth should protect the policies of the British Government when they have the character which George Russell shows them to have, in the Irish scheme now supported by so many British guns.

FRANCIS HACKETT

*New York City*



THE ECONOMICS OF IRELAND  
AND  
THE POLICY OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT  
A LABOR OF LOVE?

THE new British Ambassador to the United States, prior to his departure for Washington, perhaps with the idea of propitiating Irish opinion in America, elected to speak on St. Patrick's Day. He wore a green Irish halo for the occasion. He said it had been a labor of love for him during last summer and autumn to assist in reducing to legislative form proposals for ending the Irish question. He said the new Bill for the government of Ireland was "a sincere attempt to place definitely and finally in the hands of the elected representatives of the Irish people the duty and responsibility of working out their own salvation and the salvation of their country."

No doubt this statement has been cabled to America, and I propose to examine here how far this statement is justified and how Ireland is indebted to Sir Auckland Geddes for his interest in its welfare. I lay this down as a fundamental proposition, which I do not think will be denied, that whoever controls the taxation and trade policy of a country controls its destiny and the entire character of its civilization. The body with control over customs, excise, income-tax, supertax, excess profits duty and external trade has it in its power to make that country predominantly industrial or agricultural or to make a balance between

urban and rural interests. It can direct the external trade of the country, make it flow into this or that channel. These powers over Irish taxation and trade policy are expressly denied to Ireland. Ireland in fact has less power under this last Bill over its own economic development than it had under the Act of Union. Under that Act, Ireland had one hundred and two members in the Imperial Parliament who could at times hold the balance of power. It was not a very real power, because when the interests of Ireland and Great Britain conflicted, both parties in Great Britain united against Ireland, but still to the leaders of parties Irish votes were worth angling for, for British purposes, and had to be paid for by Land Acts or other measures. The new Bill provides that the Irish representation at Westminster shall be reduced to forty-two members, and so at Westminster Ireland is made practically powerless, while everything which really affects Irish economic interests is still legislated for by the British Parliament.

#### THE POLICY OF ECONOMIC SUBJECTION

Every clause in this new Bill betrays the greatest apprehension lest Ireland should develop industrially. It is forbidden to remit excise duties. It could not, for example, by lowering the duty build up an Irish tobacco industry, or the manufacture of industrial alcohol, or the manufacture of sugar from beets. Infant industries cannot be bountied, nor can export be encouraged by this means. The power to do that or anything like that for any of our industries is expressly denied. The jealousy against any possible great development of industries in Ireland which was manifest in the

discussions on the last Home Rule Bill is even more evident in this Bill. We are not denied powers of taxation. Oh, no, we are allowed to impose on ourselves an additional income-tax or an additional supertax, or to take off that additional income-tax or supertax. In fact after a poor country is taxed in all respects as its very rich neighbor, it is given as a special privilege the power of increasing its supertax, or the further special privilege of taking off this super-supertax. William Blake says "one law for the lion and the ox is oppression," and whatever may be said for an equal tax upon equal incomes it is manifestly unjust to insist that the same indirect taxation, the same duties on tea, sugar, tobacco, cocoa, etc., shall be charged in a country where the average wage is about thirty-five shillings per week as in a country where the worker's average weekly wage is from five to six pounds. The better paid worker can bear with comparative ease high duties on tobacco, tea, or other commodities, but these bear heavily on the poorly paid Irish worker. This boasted equality of treatment is in reality flagrant injustice, and this injustice, of which Irishmen have complained since the Act of Union was passed, will be continued under the new Bill if it becomes an Act.

#### SHACKLING IRELAND'S INDUSTRIES

If this were really a sincere attempt to undo the work of British oppression in Ireland, to leave Ireland within the Empire free to develop industrially, if Great Britain wished to make clear to the world that nothing like the suppression of the Irish woolen industry would be possible in future, that the spirit

which dictated that infamous suppression was dead, it would have left Ireland absolute freedom with regard to trade policy and taxation. The disinterested onlooker would have commented, "It would perhaps be expecting too much from Great Britain to allow Ireland political independence, but the complete freedom to develop industrially now allowed within the Empire is sign of a real change of heart." No critic of British policy with regard to Ireland can find any evidence whatever of such a change of heart. The old industrial jealousy is still obvious, and the old desire to tax Ireland that Great Britain may be enriched. Great Britain demands from Ireland a tribute of eighteen million pounds annually. A little island with four million inhabitants is expected, after providing for the expenditure on its own services, still further to provide this sum as a tribute to Great Britain. Now the main cause of the depopulation of Ireland, the main reason why it alone of all European Countries has halved its population within living memory, was the export of Irish revenues to Great Britain. After the Act of Union the Irish aristocracy began more and more to live in the new centre of political power, and the revenues from their estates formerly spent in Ireland, supporting Irish tradesmen and Irish industries, were spent in England, with the inevitable consequence that Irish industries decayed; and they could not for lack of capital be adjusted when the industrial revolution, brought about by the use of power machinery, made increased capital necessary for that adjustment. Then came on the top of this the amalgamation of the two exchequers, and Irish surpluses varying during the past century from two to five million pounds annually were exported to Great

Britain and spent there. Up to the period of the Great Famine, Ireland increased its population by cutting down its standard of living. At that time the country was swarming with beggars and paupers. The Famine forced on Ireland the tragic expedient of throwing off half its children so that those left might live, and ever since then Ireland year by year has sent its sons and daughters to the new world or the Dominions. That country which exports its revenues must export its population, and Great Britain is determined that this export of Irish revenue and Irish population shall continue, for in this new Bill it is provided that Ireland shall export eighteen million pounds annually as tribute to Great Britain.

#### EIGHTEEN MILLIONS FOR WHAT?

What does this mean? It means that as the average wage of Irish laborers is about thirty shillings a week, and if we imagine every Irish laborer with a wife and three children, the British Government withdraws from Ireland annually the means of subsistence of a population of about six or seven hundred thousand people, and spends that money in Great Britain. Workers must follow their wage, and Irish workers must emigrate in the future as in the past. What is the justification for this tribute? Great Britain protects Ireland with its army and its navy. The protection which its army gives Ireland at present is to proclaim martial law over the country, to arrest its political leaders and the most prominent of their followers, to prevent Irish Fairs being held, to prohibit the sale of Irish industries, to suppress a commission appointed by Irish Members of Parliament to inquire into

the resources and industries of Ireland, to hold with rifle and bayonet the places where it was found evidence was to be taken by this commission. This may seem unbelievable but it is actually happening, and if doubt is expressed every statement made can be verified from reports in British newspapers without Irish newspapers, which might be prejudiced to exaggeration, being quoted. "Oh," says the Imperialist, "but we protect Ireland from its foreign enemies for this eighteen million pounds." We do not know who are our foreign enemies. We never were oppressed by any people except our neighbors.

#### ROBBING A SMALL NATION

But let us for a moment grant that eighteen million pounds is the moral equivalent of that protection. We then ask what is the economic equivalent to Ireland for this eighteen millions. If you who read fall into the sea and somebody plunges in after you and saves your life and in gratitude you say, "You are entitled to all I possess;" if the rescuer takes your income, you starve. If Great Britain really desired to be just to Ireland, it would arrange that there would be an expenditure in Ireland equal to the tribute; that ships for the navy, aeroplanes, clothing for troops, munitions, etc., could be manufactured here so that while Ireland would be contributing to Imperial defence it would not be impoverished by the manner in which the tribute would be exacted. Irish workmen would be employed and paid from the Irish revenues and the money raised in Ireland would be spent in Ireland; and however heavy the taxation would be, the money raised would return to its people and its tradesmen. It would be

economically easier for Ireland to contribute eighteen millions yearly for imperial purposes, if the money was spent in Ireland, than to contribute half that amount and have the money spent in Great Britain. The tribute as it stands is sheer robbery of a poor country by a rich one. We are forced to contribute money to pay British workmen; and every Irish family, after being taxed for Irish services, must contribute on an average eighteen pounds yearly per family to the payment or support of British workmen. Because we object we are called an unreasonable people. None of the Dominions will pay tribute to Great Britain. They realize that if they export their revenues they must export their population. Spanish colonies were lost to Spain because the revenues were exported with inevitable consequent impoverishment and inevitable rebellion.

#### NO SOLUTION WANTED

I am not now arguing for a republic or for independence. I am simply trying to make clear what element of truth there is in Sir Auckland Geddes' statement that the last Government of Ireland Bill, which he helped to draft, was a sincere attempt to render justice to Ireland inside the Empire. The British Ambassador to Washington made other statements in his speech, justifying British control over our economic system. "Ireland," he said, "for good or ill was inevitably within the sphere of the British economic system. It was dependent on England for manufactured goods of all sorts, and on the entrepôt trade of England for the supply of raw materials of foreign origin. No human power, no legislation, could

end the economic and financial association of Irish and British interests, nor could any readjustment prevent Ireland suffering because of disturbances in the exchange-rate between the London money-market and the markets of the outside world." I grant that the proximity of Great Britain to Ireland makes both these countries natural customers to each other. But Great Britain is not content with such natural trade. She forces us to trade with her only. Irish shipping, once prosperous, was gradually crushed out. Only a few days ago a British paper announced with exultation that the last independent Irish shipping company had been incorporated in a British shipping trust and there was not one single Irish overseas shipping company left. As it is, we have now to get permits to export Irish produce anywhere except to Great Britain. What Sir Auckland Geddes would have us believe is that we could not get manufactured goods anywhere in the world except from Great Britain; that America, for example, would not or could not trade with us; that we could not get steel from the United States for our ship-building industry, or that Belgium or Russia would not sell flax to our linen-manufacturers, but for our union with Great Britain: in fact we would be outcasts of the industrial world and no nation would trade with us, only that Great Britain supports us with its credit and sees to it that we pay our bills.

#### CHEATED ON EXCHANGE

With reference to the exchange, I might point out that the 1918 report on the Irish trade in imports and exports shows that Irish exports exceeded in value the imports by £26,885,000 or twenty-five per cent,

The exports were valued at £152,903,000 and the imports at £126,018,000. If Ireland had an independent economic system and if the laws which govern the rates of exchange between Great Britain and the United States, or between Great Britain and France, prevailed, the British pound sterling would decline in value to about seventeen or sixteen shillings, and the Irish pound would appreciate in value in purchasing goods in Great Britain. Great Britain could not export gold at the rate of twenty-five million pounds annually to balance its trade with us. It balances accounts between Ireland and itself by the simple plan of extracting eighteen million pounds

All these restrictions Sir Auckland Geddes has helped during a summer and autumn to devise. As he says, it has been "a labor of love" to him. If there were any other restrictions which this labor of love did not suggest to him, are they not all provided for by the power of veto given to the Irish Viceroy, who will give dissent or approval to Irish legislation on advice from the British Government? Finally is there not the British army, encamped in Ireland with tanks, aeroplanes, armoured cars, poisonous gas-bombs and all the paraphernalia of control? British interests are quite safe. It is only the ironical humor of British Members of Parliament which makes them protest to the world that they are endangering their Empire by giving Ireland so much liberty and so many Parliaments.

#### THE RELIGIOUS ISSUE

As for the moral consequences of this Government of Ireland Bill, if it is put into operation it will artificially divide Protestant and Catholic. Nothing could

be more loathsome to the man of liberal mind than this reactionary attempt to make religion the basis of politics. I, as an Irish Protestant and an Ulsterman by birth, have lived in Southern Ireland most of my life. I have worked in every county, and I have never found my religion made any barrier between myself and my Catholic countrymen, nor was my religion a bar to my work; and in that ill-fated Irish Convention one Southern Protestant Unionist after another rose up to say they did not fear persecution from their Nationalist and Catholic countrymen. The leader of the Southern Unionists made an eloquent appeal to the Ulster Unionists to throw their lot in with the rest of Ireland; he said, "We who have lived among Nationalists trust them; we ask you to trust them." It was not the policy of the British Government that one section of the Irish people should trust the other section; and Mr. Lloyd George invented the "two Nations" theory to keep Ireland divided. He has painted an imaginative political landscape of Ireland, a country he has never been in, and expects Ireland to adjust itself until it becomes like his imaginary political landscape. The Ulsterman and industrialist is told that the farmers of Ireland will tax him out of existence if he comes into an all-Irish Parliament. A British finger is pointed at the Irish Nationalist as the person who will plunder the poor Ulsterman, all the time another British hand is securely in the Ulster pocket; and Ulster is being depopulated at exactly the same rate as the other three Provinces. "Nationalist Ireland will tax Ulster out of existence," says the British politician, who arranges in this very Bill that the six Ulster Counties shall every year export £7,920,000 as their share of Imperial tribute after pay-

ing for their own services. Is it conceivable that Irish Nationalists would tax those six counties as the British Government taxes them and intends to continue taxing them, all the while warning the poor deluded Belfast worker against possible depredations on his pocket by the Southern Irishman?

#### ULSTER NOT "MOST PROSPEROUS"

The truth is that Nationalist Ireland is much richer than Unionist Ireland. The theory that Ulster Unionists create most of the wealth of the country is demonstrably untrue. One has only to read the report on the Irish trade in imports and exports, and compare the values of exports from Nationalist Ireland with the values of exports from Unionist Ireland to realize that agricultural and Nationalist Ireland is the great wealth-producer. But even in this we can not take figures at their face value. The export of ships, mainly from Belfast, was valued in 1918 at £10,147,000, the highest recorded value, and the Belfast people are justly entitled to think with pride of these world-famous yards of theirs. But if we compare this output, not with the great cattle trade, but with one of the minor branches of Irish agricultural industry, the egg and poultry trade, shipbuilding as a wealth-creating industry takes its proper place. In 1918 the women on the farms of Ireland were able to export eggs and poultry to the value of £18,449,310. Now the point about this total as compared with the value of the output of the shipbuilders is that the nominal values do not indicate the real wealth created. Practically all the £18,440,310 was new wealth created out of the earth, since not five per cent of the feeding stuffs used were imported. If we

look at the import-statistics we see that vast sums were paid for steel, iron, coal and other raw materials to enable the shipbuilders to get to work, so that less new wealth is created in the one industry than in the other, pound for pound in value. And this applies to almost all the industries carried on in Nationalist Ireland; a much smaller percentage of raw materials required is imported, and more real wealth is created than in North Ireland. If we examine into the means of production we find that there is more actual profit for the producer in every pound of final value, than in the case of the manufacturing industries in North-east Ulster. I do not wish to depreciate in any way the magnificent energy of Ulster Irishmen. They have a right to be proud of what they have achieved, but it is not right to speak of that corner of Ireland as the wealth-creating centre. It will really suffer much more than the rest of Ireland under the régime Mr. Lloyd George has devised. He has cleverly taken the Ulstermen's own valuation of their wealth-producing capacity, and he demands from six Ulster Counties a tribute of £7,920,000 annually. This will go to pay British workmen, not Belfast workmen. I believe it will not take my Ulster countrymen very long to find out who really is oppressing them.

#### GIVE IRELAND FREEDOM

The Bill which Sir Auckland Geddes helped to plan does not enable Ireland to work out its own salvation. We in Ireland ask for powers to enable us to build up a civilization which will fit our character and genius as the glove fits the hand. We can not do that while an external power controls our taxation, revenues and

trade policy. It is the noblest and most practical of all human enterprises—the building up of civilization—and why the desire to do it should be deplored rather than lauded, I do not know. The British people, though they live beside us, know nothing about us—nothing about our national culture, history and traditions, or our legendary literature, so rich and imaginative, as ancient as the Greek, and going back as the legends of all ancient peoples do, to the creation of the world. The English are a comparatively new people with no mythology or antiquity of their own and they ignore Irish culture or try to crush it out in the schools they create. They believe or pretend to believe of the flame of nationality which burns so brightly in Ireland to-day that it is only a transitory passion. It will all burn out soon enough. A little more resolute repression, and it will disappear. They are so proud of their material might that they understand nothing of the power of spiritual ideas. I imagine that on a red sunset nineteen hundred years ago some believer in the all-conquering might of material power murmured so, as he gazed upon a crucified figure. A young man who had been troubling society with impalpable doctrines of a new civilization which he called “the Kingdom of Heaven” had been put out of the way; and I can imagine that believer in material power murmuring as he went homeward, “It will all blow over now.” Yes. The wind from the Kingdom of Heaven has blown over the world, and shall blow for centuries yet. After the spiritual powers, there is nothing in the world more unconquerable than the spirit of nationality. Once it is created, it can raise up Babylons from the sands of the desert, and leave behind it monuments which awe us like the majesties of nature. It can not be suppressed. It is like the wheat

which when cut down before it has seeded, springs up again and again. So the spirit of nationality in Ireland will persist even though the mightiest of material powers be its neighbour. It springs from biological necessity. We desire to create a civilization of our own, expressing our nature and genius; and therefore we ask for freedom and power. That freedom and that power to build up our own life are not given to us by the scheme which the British Ambassador to America helped to devise. In spite of his fine words about freedom, he was only tightening our chains; and I write this in order that no American who is interested in Ireland may be deceived. It is not self-government the British are bestowing on us; they are digging for us a dungeon even deeper than Pitt digged for us in the Act of Union.

## BOOKS OF VALUE ON IRELAND

**The National Being, Some Thought on an Irish Polity.** By A. E. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1916. 176 pages.

What kind of Ireland do Irishmen desire to build? The Ulsterman George Russell strives in this ardent and noble book to give a worthy direction to the fresh national Irish will. He begins with fiercely humble admissions. "Our mean and disordered little country towns in Ireland, with their drink-shops, their disregard of cleanliness or beauty, accord with the character of the civilians who inhabit them." He goes on to large social considerations. "If we build our civilization without integrating labor into its economic structure, it will wreck that civilization." And he rises to a whole philosophy of polities: "We should aim at a society where people will be at harmony in their economic life, will readily listen to different opinions from their own, will not turn sour faces on those who do not think as they do; but will, by reason and sympathy, comprehend each other and come at last, through sympathy and affection, to a balancing of their diversities . . ." The National Being is more than a definition of Irish nationalism. It is a definition of the soul that politics is called on to save.

**The Framework of Home Rule.** By ERSKINE CHILDERS. London: Edward Arnold, 1911. 354 pages.

This is an able examination of the guiding principles of self-determination. Written in 1911, before the author's reputed conversion to Sinn Fein, it went into the question of Ireland's status in the British Empire and it made out a powerful case for fiscal autonomy and dominion status for Ireland. The historical introduction is of great importance. It traces the relation to Britain of Canada, Australia and South Africa, and it uses with admirable force these analogies of untrammelled dominion control. As the advocacy of a definite scheme, this book has had perhaps more influence than any other Irish book of recent years. Except for its minimizing of the Ulster difficulty, it is intellectually a model of just and thorough discussion. The author is an Englishman.

**Ireland's Fight for Freedom.** By GEORGE CREEL. New York: Harper & Bros., 1919. 199 pages.

The sub-title of Mr. Creel's book is "Setting Forth the High Lights of Irish History." This is exactly what his book does. Starting with the principle embraced in the recent resolution of the United States Senate

—"That the Senate of the United States express its sympathy with the aspirations of the Irish people for a government of its own choice."

—Mr. Creel rehearses the long struggle of the Irish people against the intruder whether as conqueror, confiscator, planter, administrator

or legislator. Packed with facts as to the "five centuries of war" and the "two centuries of rebellion," Mr. Creel exhibits a strong Irish case for complete independence, with due attention to the Ulster problem and the related "Case of Canada." The book does not mince matters. It is clear, terse, fluent and graphic. Its limitation may be said to be its journalistic and derivative character. It is the brief of a special pleader, not a judge. But it is substantially an accurate brief, addressed by an American to the American public, appealing vigorously to an accepted American principle of self-government.

**The Fall of Feudalism in Ireland.** By MICHAEL DAVITT. New York: Harper & Bros., 1904. 751 pages.

This is the epic of the Land League Revolution. In concrete style Michael Davitt relates the dramatic history of Ireland's confiscation in the interests of English possessors, and the re-conquest of Ireland in the interests of the Irish peasantry proprietary. The work of a passionate Nationalist, *The Fall of Feudalism* is in no sense unconsidered rhetoric. It is an invaluable source-book of Ireland's agrarian history. The crucial period of so-called "Parnellism and Crime" is closely covered by Davitt, and his estimates of his associates, including his ex-leader Parnell, remain of deep interest. The book is a monument to the reform of Irish land tenure, and to the men who wrought that reform.

**England's Case Against Home Rule.** By A. V. DICEY. London: John Murray, 1887. 311 pages.

As Vinerian Professor of English law in the University of Oxford, Mr. Dicey's reputation is worldwide. The aim of this compact volume is "to criticize from a purely English point of view the policy of Home Rule." Home Rule in all the forms under discussion—federalism, "colonial independence," "the revival of Grattan's constitution," and Gladstonian Home Rule—are closely examined, and the confusion and vital defects of the Gladstonian compromise receive a specially merciless criticism. Mr. Dicey does not pretend to be impartial or infallible and in ascribing Irish "discontent" to agrarian rather than political causes he evidently went astray; but his book is indispensable in its cool and searching scrutiny of the Liberal claim that the parliamentary manifestation of Irish nationalism is compatible with the British constitution.

**Contemporary Ireland.** By L. PAUL-DUBOIS. Translated by T. M. Kettle. Dublin: Maunsel & Co., 1908. New York: Baker & Taylor (out of print). 536 pages.

A translation of *L'Irlande Contemporaine*, Paris, 1907. The book is written by a member of the Brunetière group. Its "five hundred crowded pages represent the attempt of a mind, at once scientific and imaginative, to see Ireland steadily, and to see it whole . . . The book is founded

not on prejudice, or unreasoned feeling, or raw idealism, but on a broad colligation of facts." So the translator, the late Lieut. Kettle, M. P. It falls into four parts: the extraordinarily succinct historical introduction, the examination of political and social conditions, the analysis of Ireland's material decadence, and the grave discussion of the factors in regeneration. The material is superbly amassed and commanded. No book rivals this book for competent research, and the point of view is on the whole profoundly sympathetic and nationalistic.

**Thomas Davis, the Thinker and Teacher**, selected, arranged and edited by ARTHUR GRIFFITH, Vice-President of the Republic of Ireland. Dublin: M. H. Gill & Son, Ltd., 1918. 279 pages.

Mr. Arthur Griffith originated the principles of Sinn Fein from the poetry of Thomas Davis. In his preface to the work of this poet-liberator, he says:

"Davis was the first public man in modern Ireland to realize that the Nation must be rebuilt upon the Gael." Poems and prose selections follow, first published in the paper the *Nation* during the three short years from 1842 to 1845, when Davis drove into the minds of the Irish the truth, that the power to reconstruct their nationality was vested solely in themselves.

**Ireland, A Study in Nationalism.** By FRANCIS HACKETT. New York: B. W. Huebsch, 1918. 410 pages. New edition with new Preface, 1919.

When Mr. Hackett's book appeared two years ago, it was hailed by the critics as the one book on Ireland in our generation; nor has it suffered in comparison with later literature on the subject. Its particular aspects might be summed up as follows: his evolution from Home Ruler to Republican with the reasons; the dramatic arrangement of his material; his indictment of England through figures, statistics; his fearless exposition of the obstructive power of the Roman Catholic Hierarchy (considered politically not religiously); the style, of which Mr. Padraic Colum says, ". . . there is a distinct racial quality. In its sentences, spare and swift, is the quality of a race that boasted of its swords that they never left a remnant of a blow."

**The Evolution of Sinn Fein.** By ROBERT MITCHEL HENRY. New York: B. W. HUEBSCH, 1920. 318 pages.

Ireland is always a burning question, but Sinn Fein is a blazing one; a bonfire within a bonfire, not to be put out by machine guns or the soft words of British imperialists. Professor Henry, of Queen's University, Belfast, tells the story of this conflagration with the ironic insight and the judicial impartiality common to few historians. For the first time

the ultimate aims of the movement are clarified and given utterance. "Sinn Fein," he says in his conclusion, "aims at the complete political, the complete economic and complete moral and intellectual independence of Ireland."

But Sinn Fein has not always aimed at such complete emancipation. By what slow processes it has come to be Ireland's chief source of strength and hope, is the author's theme. The successive stupidities of England's Irish policy account for the growing solidarity between the old warring factions that have been Ireland's destruction in the past. This movement's evolution—from a mere fanciful word—is told with the skill of a dramatist. But in spite of its dramatic quality the book remains detached and carefully historical throughout, ending with a note that is significantly new to the impetuous Gaelic temperament:

"It may in the future be recognized by the conscience of mankind that no nation ought to exercise political domination over another nation. But that future may still be as remote as it seemed in the days of the Roman Empire."

**A Literary History of Ireland, from Earliest Times to the Present Day.** By DOUGLAS HYDE. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1906. 654 pages.

The assassination of the Irish language is part of the history of Anglo-Irish relations. In this volume Dr. Hyde is less concerned with this political fact than with the culture embodied in the language he has helped to revive. What is there to be said of the specific Irish civilization, its sagas and its traditions and its legacy? Dr. Hyde's work is the extended answer to this relevant question. His book is thus inscribed: "To the members of the Gaelic League, the only body in Ireland which appears to realize the fact that Ireland has a past, has a history, has a literature, and the only body in Ireland which seeks to render the present a rational continuation of the past, I dedicate this attempt at a review of that literature which despite its present neglected position they feel and know to be a true possession of national importance." Out of the Gaelic League came most of the present Sinn Fein movement. Dr. Hyde is a Protestant Irishman, son of a clergyman.

**A Social History of Ancient Ireland.** By P. W. JOYCE, M.A. The Gresham Publishing Co., Ltd., Dublin and Belfast. 2 vols. 579 pages.

An examination in detail of life in ancient Ireland: their industries: games: dress. The daily life of an old Gael is traced from his rising; his bed is described; his breakfast, business, law courts, amusements. Of value to read now, as proof of the high civilization a free Ireland could attain.

**A Consideration of the State of Ireland in the Nineteenth Century.** By G. LOCKER LAMPSON. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1907. 609 pages.

Mr. Lampson is a Unionist M.P. He asks, "How is it that the King is none the richer for Ireland?" His answer is one of the most fluent, exhaustive and picturesque indictments of English rule in Ireland. Although it ends in a plea for the Union, it manages to present a sheaf of evidence damaging to the English government in every branch of Irish administration. The land question, the question of the Established Church, the history of Irish education and the history of Home Rule are saliently handled, and subjects are fortified by excellent quotations. Mr. Lampson is an Englishman.

**A History of Ireland in the Eighteenth Century.** By W. E. H. LECKY. New York: D Appleton & Co., 1893. Five volumes.

No one exceeded Lecky in his detestation of the modern Land Revolution in Ireland. He denounced it as "an 'elaborate and all pervading tyranny' accompanied by perhaps as much mean and savage cruelty, and supported by as much shameless and deliberate lying, as any movement of the nineteenth century." Yet his five-volume history of eighteenth-century Ireland, ending with the Union, is a laborious, scrupulous disentanglement of an older and infinitely more extensive tyranny, cruelty and lying, on the part of the alien government. These volumes constitute a valuable approach to modern Ireland. They are compiled by corral process. They are confessedly dull reading. They profess no particular sympathy for the victimized majority. But Lecky is honest, and from his painstaking narrative one is able to form one's own conclusions as to the unstable bases of modern Anglo-Irish democratic relations.

**Ireland A Nation.** By ROBERT LYND. New York: Dodd Mead & Co., 1920. 299 pages.

The author, literary editor of the London *Daily News*, a Protestant and for the Allies, says: "Has Japan contributed as many dead as Ireland? She has not. Yet Japan is praised. Has New Zealand contributed as many? She has not. Yet New Zealand is praised. Has South Africa? Has Canada? Captain Esmode, M.P., said in the House of Commons: 'I have seen, myself, buried in one grave, 400 Nationalist soldiers killed in one fight—two-thirds as many as the total number the Dublin insurgents of Easter week. And that mournful spectacle was being repeated not after one fight, but after fifty during the war. In the most desperate days of the war—at Mons and at the Marne—Irishmen

were present at the thickest of the fighting and battalion after battalion gave itself up to the slaughter singing The Bold Fenian Men, A Nation Once Again and other songs of the kind that police nowadays suppress with baton charges in Ireland."

Mr. Lynd puts Ireland with Poland and sees the Irish question in its international aspect, a cool advocate, dispassionate, effective.

**Literature In Ireland.** By THOMAS MAC DONAGH. New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company, 1917. 248 pages.

This is an acute piece of literary criticism, but of propaganda value also, for the flower of a free Ireland is to be her culture. In these studies, Thomas Mac Donagh, a martyr of Easter Week, proves that though the Irish poets finally had to come to English words, they still clung to Gaelic metres. Rhythm, tone and spirit kept persistently native; only the dress was foreign and created what he calls an "Irish Mode." "Of the new literature in Ireland," he says: "It has a note of pride, of self-reliance almost of arrogance;" which to him presaged political success.

**Phases of Irish History.** By EOIN MACNEILL, Professor of Ancient Irish History in the National University of Ireland and Minister of the Interior of the Republic of Ireland. Dublin: M. H. Gill & Son, Ltd., 1919. 364 pages.

An exact scientific refutation of Mr. Arthur Balfour's erroneous statement that the ancient Irish were a number of wandering tribes with no sense of national consciousness. Professor MacNeil proves their unity; that they never conceived of Ireland except as one nation. How deep-rooted is the aspiration of the Irish people for independence is shown in the following sentence: Here, [he is writing of the fourteenth century] we have the second attempt within fifteen years on the part of the Irish to determine the sovereignty under which they were to live." The divisions are: the Ancient Irish; the Celtic Colonization of Britain and Ireland; Ireland's Golden Age; the Norman Conquest; the Irish Rally. Keating is proved wrong in places and fallacies about the clan system are dispelled.

**A History of the Commercial and Financial Relations Between England and Ireland from the Period of the Restoration.** By ALICE EFFIE MURRAY. London: P. S. King & Son, 1907. 486 pages.

This work is the fortunate result of a research studentship at the London School of Economics. It is one of the first and one of the best modern documents in Ireland's economic case against English rule. Concentrating most of its attention on the deliberate ruin of Irish industry, the book continues its survey to recent times in a manner less de-

tailed. As the "fourth meat-producing country in the world," Ireland is predominantly agricultural in Miss Murray's estimation, and calls for an economic policy based on this and other agricultural conditions. Miss Murray throws some light on the anomaly of Ulster. Her contribution gains in impressiveness because it is the work of a disinterested scientific outsider.

**The Life of Charles Stewart Parnell.** By R. BARRY O'BRIEN. New York: Harper & Bros., 1898. 771 pages.

Parnell was both a hero and a human being to Barry O'Brien. In English books like Morley's *Recollections* and Morley's *Life of Gladstone* the unstinted admiration for Parnell is tintured with the sad sense that his was a cold and destructive genius. O'Brien amply portrays a more intelligible national leader. Parnell did his lifework in twelve years. In that time he articulated the demands of a whole people and he forced those demands on a most powerful, most supercilious, most reluctant Empire. In doing this he was implacable. Only by sheer moral superiority, accompanied by unbending militancy, could Parnell have won his victories against the interests that opposed him. The history of those bitter victories and the tragic defeat that followed them finds in Barry O'Brien an intimate and devoted chronicler. The book has a great subject and it is very nearly a great biography.

**The Collected Works of Padraic H. Pearse.** New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company, 1917. 341 pages.

Stories (mainly for children) poems, plays, make up this book. In a drama, "The Singer," Pearse has given his message to the world and also prophesies his own death, when he makes McDara the principal character say, "One man can free a nation as one Man redeemed the world," and again, "I will take no pike. I will go into the battle with bare hands. I will stand up before the Gall as Christ hung naked before men on the tree!" Every line he wrote breathes the uncompromising idealism of the first president of the Irish Republic, his passion for the saving of Gaelic Ireland, the cause in which he spent himself.

**Ireland in the New Century.** By HORACE PLUNKETT. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1904. 300 pages.

When Sir Horace Plunkett wrote this much-debated volume he was a Unionist by natural affinity. The most important thing for Ireland, as he saw it, certainly the most important thing for Ireland's sense of "inferiority," was to escape the "obsession" of nationalistic politics by "organizing self help" close to the ground. Since that time Sir Horace has abandoned some of his own precepts. He now believes in Dominion self-government and is at the head of a political party. His book, how-

ever, remains a most representative exposition of the non-nationalistic point of view. Its wise immediacy with regard to rural life and the rich resources at hand, its astringent criticism of Irish backwardness and non-Britishness, are all based on the interesting hypothesis that to be pro-Irish it is utterly unnecessary to be anti-English. No book on the same lines has superseded Sir Horace's.

**The Irish Labor Movement.** By W. P. RYAN. New York: B. W. Huebsch, 1920. 295 pages.

This book tells the story of Ireland's double slavery. Commonly people see Ireland bound by only one chain, only bent under one burden—political vassalage to England. With this subject books on Ireland are nearly all concerned. The author, one of the editors of the London *Daily Herald*, poet and playwright, is one of the first to deal adequately with another aspect of his country's dilemma. For Ireland has at present another burden and another chain, only English by accident—capitalistic economic organization as foreign to the Gaelic genius as the culture and language and political impositions of England are foreign. W. P. Ryan is by declaration a disciple of Larkin and Connelly although by definition he proves himself to be always more mild than they. For him the solution of Ireland's economic slavery includes the solution of her political misfortunes. Because he has a clear idea of Ireland's potentialities as a cultural unit he becomes an advocate of the Irish Labor Movement. Ireland, in his imagination, is walled into a dungeon: one stone removed lets fall the entire prison. The book covers three centuries and ends with the present day.

**Sixteen Dead Men and Other Poems of Easter Week.** By DORA SIGERSON SHORTER. New York: Mitchell Kennerley, 1919. 85 pages.

From Editor's Note: "This book is a sacred obligation to one who broke her heart over Ireland. Dora Sigerson in her last few weeks of life, knowing full well that she was dying, designed every detail of this little volume—the dedication to the tri-color, introduction, and the order in which the poems are printed. Any profit that may arise from the sale of the book will be devoted, as are all the copyrights of the author, to a monument which she herself sculptured with a view to its erection over the graves of the 'Sixteen Dead Men' when circumstances place their ashes in Glensenvin."

These are flaming songs typical of the Irish reaction from defeat.



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